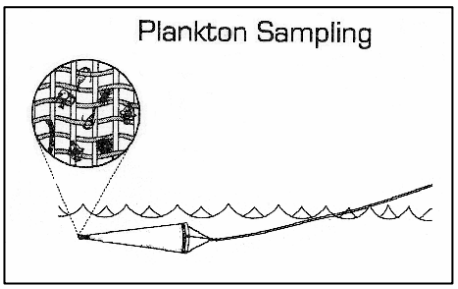
Plankton Tow:



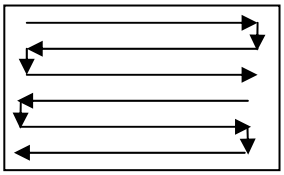
- Perform tow from floating dock, pier, bridge, edge of lake, etc. at your desired sampling location.
- Sample at the same location every week (or biweekly) to monitor changes at that particular site over time.
- Pull plankton net for **THREE MINUTES** with 20 micron mesh plankton net.
- Take sample to laboratory for identification.
- Sample can last for up to 48 hours after plankton tow.
- Store at room temperature (NOT in car or refrigerator) with cap loosened to allow some air flow into sample bottle.

Preparing a Slide:

- Tighten cap on sample bottle and mix slowly by turning bottle upside down and back.
- Squeeze pipette and take sample from the bottom of sample bottle.
- Place two to three drops from pipette onto the middle of the slide.
- Lay cover slip at an angle to avoid air bubbles.
- *Helpful Tip:* Slide will dry out and form salt crystals from the heat of the light so you may need to clean slide and prepare a new one for further identification.

Microscope Techniques:

- Use 10x or 20x objective lens.
- Make sure to dim the amount of light if needed.
- Make at least two slides of the same sample to ensure that you are observing everything in the sample. If you have a class, students can do individual/group slides and combine findings.
- Move through the slide using the “lawnmower method” to avoid counting the same species twice. The “lawnmower method”: start at the corner of the slide and systematically move up and down, left and right. Make sure to cover the entire slide, leave no empty space.



Example of “lawnmower method”